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Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations

I. Introduction

1. In its report of 21 May 1998 (A/53/127, para. 115) the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations requested that I submit a report upon the progress made in the implementation of its recommendations on which other specific reports had not been requested.

2. The present report is submitted in response to that request. As in my previous report (A/AC.121/42 and Corr.1), the structure of the present text, for ease of reference, follows the organization of section III, entitled "Proposals, recommendations and conclusions", of the Special Committee's 1998 report.

II. Guiding principles, definitions and implementation of mandates

3. Over the past year, the Secretariat has continued to work to ensure a coherent, well planned, coordinated and comprehensive approach to conflict situations, which makes use of political, social and developmental instruments. It has also sought to further ensure that those efforts can continue without interruption after the departure of a peacekeeping operation.

4. These efforts are based upon the international community's understanding that an effective response to complex, post-cold war conflicts often requires simultaneous action to address peacekeeping and development needs. These tasks have been seen to be mutually reinforcing, while the absence of either one may undermine the sustainability of the other. A peacekeeping operation can offer a unique opportunity to advance not only political, but also social and economic progress. At the same time, continuing poverty and a lack of effective political institutions can trigger a return to conflict after a peacekeeping operation is withdrawn.

5. In this context, peacekeeping operations have continued to receive mandates in areas ranging from human rights through electoral assistance to police monitoring, as a means to secure the foundations of lasting peace. Peacekeepers must work closely with a wide range of partners in the field, both within and outside of the United Nations system, to perform such mandates. In order to ensure that the work of these many actors is mutually reinforcing, the Secretariat has continued to develop organizational structures, both at Headquarters and in the field, that support a coherent approach.

6. At Headquarters, discussions among various departments and United Nations agencies through the system of Executive Committees have developed into an important

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mechanism to enhance cooperation and exchanges of views. Dialogue with principals of departments with a wide range of specialties has enabled the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to establish an atmosphere of ongoing collaboration.

7. Coordination in the field continues to be based on the fact that the reporting lines of an operation mean that a Special Representative of the Secretary-General forms a natural centre for decision-making. This arrangement has been further clarified through the finalization by the Secretariat over the past year of directives for Special Representatives within multidisciplinary operations. In order to enhance further this structural integration, I have also continued to appoint resident coordinators to serve as deputy to the head of mission, where this would be appropriate. This has been the case for Haiti, which I cited in my previous report; and I have established such arrangements in Tajikistan and the Central African Republic as well.

8. These arrangements can also help promote continuity between United Nations efforts before and after peacekeeping, and strengthen the foundations for follow-up action. Other ways in which the Secretariat seeks to advance these objectives include the use of follow-on peacekeeping operations based primarily on police: the United Nations concluded an operation of this nature in Croatia in mid-October 1998, and continues to deploy such operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Haiti. Also, as I noted in last year's report to the Special Committee, another measure to facilitate transition from peacekeeping to peace-building is the deployment of a political office in a mission area, as was the case in Liberia.

9. With reference to the Special Committee's encouragement for the formulation of uniform rules of engagement for each specific peacekeeping operation in consultation with prospective troop contributors, each peacekeeping operation has rules of engagement that apply to all contingents. It is standard Secretariat procedure to discuss significant innovations in this regard with troop contributors; in addition, changes initiated at the field level are usually the product of discussions between the Force Commander and contingent commanders, under the authority of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

III. Consultations

10. The Secretariat has made my reports to the Security Council on peacekeeping available to troop contributors prior to consultations, except in the few exceptional cases where this was not possible due to late-breaking developments in the field. In those and other special circumstances, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has increased the frequency of its briefings to troop contributors. When appropriate, the troop contributors have been briefed on a daily basis, as was the case following the hostage-taking situations that occurred in Georgia, and the loss of United Nations flights 806 and 806A in Angola. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations remains constantly available to troop contributors to provide them with information on existing missions, or on potential new operations. I invite troop contributors to continue to rely on the Secretariat in this regard.

IV. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations for peacekeeping

A. Personnel

11. While the number of peacekeepers deployed in the field has declined significantly within recent years, the number of operations has remained relatively stable. During this period, it has been the experience of the Secretariat that, for most of the activities discharged by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the number of peacekeeping operations being planned and conducted, rather than the number of personnel deployed, determines the extent of work required. The reduced size of operations has not brought about a corresponding reduction in the amount of time required to persuade parties in conflict to negotiate, in the number of meetings with and reports to the Security Council and troop-contributing countries or in the labour necessary to prepare documents such as status-of-forces agreements or rules of engagement.

12. Furthermore, the trend towards smaller operations having a greater proportion of specialized units, military observers and police has meant that today's missions require greater per capita administrative and logistic support than in the earlier days of peacekeeping.

13. As urged by the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has undertaken a programme for the phasing out of gratis personnel which is to be completed by the end of February 1999. The Special Committee also stressed the need to provide adequate funding for "appropriate posts"; in this regard, the General Assembly approved, in 1998, 55 additional posts for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, of which 48 represented conversions of gratis

positions, and recommended the redeployment of 23 posts. With the phasing out of gratis personnel, this decision provides for more funded posts, although for a substantially reduced capacity, at Headquarters, and could have a negative impact upon the ability of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to respond to new demands.

14. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations undertook an expedited process of recruitment, with due regard to geographical representation and gender balance, to minimize disruption and ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible. However, as regards gender balance, some difficulties were posed by the pool of applicants; despite the efforts of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations to encourage women candidates, of a total of 1,114 applications, only 31 were from women. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations hopes that, when the next round of posts is advertised for officers on secondment from their Governments, there will be a significantly improved response from Member States to its need to increase the number of women military and civilian police personnel serving in peacekeeping.

15. Progress at senior and middle levels at United Nations Headquarters continues to be difficult to achieve owing primarily to lack of appropriate vacant posts. As regards gender balance in the field, there has been an increase in women holding senior positions in the field. Within the 16 operations currently deployed, 10 of which are under civilian authority, two heads of mission and one deputy head of mission are women.

16. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is currently gathering statistics provided by Member States contributing personnel so as to provide data on the participation of women in their military and civilian police establishments, in order to have a better understanding of the potential to increase the participation of women in peacekeeping in the foreseeable future. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is also looking into the initiation of a gender sensitivity training programme for its staff.

17. Selection of military commanders and police commissioners is made on the basis of mission requirements and professional merit with full reference to a standard series of criteria, including geographical distribution, and due regard for political considerations. Contingent participation is taken into consideration for those missions with formed troops. The process for selection includes a systematic analysis of professional experience, followed by an interview with potential candidates where practicable. A recommendation is then prepared and sent to the Secretary-General, for his approval and communication to the Security Council.

18. The Field Administration and Logistics Division has continued its efforts to interview and select potential Chief Administrative Officer candidates and has been actively in contact with other United Nations agencies, programmes and offices in this regard, including through participation in a United Nations training programme for civilian personnel of peacekeeping/humanitarian operations which was held in Italy; planning for a second three-month training programme for potential Chief Administrative Officer/senior management candidates is now under way. Outside recruitment partners have also been contacted with a view to identifying and interviewing highly qualified personnel with relevant experience who could be included in the senior management pool of the Field Administration and Logistics Division.

19. The Secretariat has initiated an interdepartmental effort to develop comprehensive guidelines for concerned Member States on the procedures that should apply for former United Nations peacekeeping personnel who have been requested to give testimony to the international criminal tribunals. The Secretariat cooperates with the international criminal tribunals to the maximum extent possible, subject only to such safeguards as are needed to protect essential interests of the Organization, and to those related to the protection of confidential information and to the personal safety of mission personnel.

20. The Secretariat has accordingly pursued a policy of waiving the immunity from legal process enjoyed by force commanders and other peacekeeping personnel to the extent necessary to permit them to answer questions that seek to establish the existence of any of the elements of any of the crimes set out in the statutes of the international tribunals, or that might establish the existence, in respect of any individual, of circumstances of an exculpatory or mitigatory nature. In relation to disclosure of information of a sensitive or confidential nature, the Secretariat has made it a condition of its waivers that the force commanders testify in closed session and that the tribunal prohibit disclosure of the information concerned to anyone other than the tribunal itself, the parties to the case and their advisers. Additional protective measures, such as the redaction of documents, might be specified depending on the circumstances of the particular case.

21. Waivers have not extended to the disclosure of information relating to the internal decision-making of the United Nations or of Member States that contributed contingents to the United Nations forces concerned. Such

information is not only strictly confidential, but also irrelevant to establishing the elements of any of the crimes that fall within the jurisdiction of the two international tribunals.

B. Organization, planning and coordination

22. As a means of ensuring the fulfilment of the functions of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a reorganization of the Department is under way which comprises several changes.

23. The first is the consolidation of military expertise: to ensure viability and synergy, all military personnel, as well as civilian police, have been brought together in one division, headed by the Military Adviser. Coordinating mechanisms with the Offices of the two Assistant Secretaries-General will be strengthened to ensure the new division's full integration with the rest of the Department. The Situation Centre has been placed within the responsibility of the Office of Operations, in recognition of the need for close cooperation between them. As previously conveyed to the Special Committee, the Lessons Learned Unit and the Policy and Analysis Unit have been integrated, to foster synergies based upon their complementary tasks.

24. The Secretariat will provide full details of the staffing and structure of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations within its reports to the budgetary committees.

25. As noted above, the participation of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs has strengthened its cooperation with the Department of Political Affairs, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other United Nations bodies on the management of existing missions and contingency planning for potential new operations. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations also chairs interdepartmental task forces established for each multidimensional peacekeeping operation, to ensure close coordination among relevant departments and United Nations agencies. The members of the Executive Committee on Peace and Security and of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs have also provided extensive input into the formulation of my standard guidelines to my Special Representatives in the field, which emphasize the need for close coordination and unity of purpose among peacekeeping operations and United Nations agencies under the lead of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Secretariat welcomes the Special Committee's encouragement to the providing of sufficient funds to the Special Representatives so as to ensure the efficiency and effectiveness of peacekeeping operations, and those needs will accordingly continue to be reflected in detail in my reports to the General Assembly on the various operations.

26. When planning for an operation is under way, the Secretariat makes every effort to bring expeditiously to the attention of willing Member States opportunities to participate in all phases of peacekeeping operations. Seventy-eight countries are now contributing troops to the United Nations; 81 Member States have indicated a readiness to contribute troops through the standby arrangements system.

27. Full consideration is given to all offers of participation, both from within and outside of the standby arrangements. The Secretariat deeply appreciates such offers, which represent a clear demonstration of support for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and seeks to accommodate as wide a range of contributors as possible.

28. At the same time, owing to limitations of size and of budget, as well as particular requirements regarding capacity or political considerations, the Secretariat cannot make full use of all offers that are made to participate in a particular operation. The Secretariat attaches great importance to ensuring transparency throughout the process, and seeks to promptly inform all those who have offered to contribute, of the likely composition of a mission.

29. In this connection, it should be recalled that, as indicated to the Fourth Committee, the United Nations has established a new policy concerning the minimum age of peacekeepers, according to which the Secretariat is requesting that troop-contributing countries do not send civilian police and military observers younger than 25 years of age to serve in peacekeeping operations. Furthermore, national contingent soldiers should preferably be 21 years of age, and definitely not under age 18, when deployed in a United Nations peacekeeping operation. This policy is intended to ensure that the Organization benefits from experienced and mature uniformed personnel able to perform their duties according to the highest standards of the Organization. This policy should also serve as an example for police and military forces worldwide, at a time when children in large numbers are, unacceptably, recruited to participate in armed conflicts.

30. The Secretariat, and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations specifically, have been strengthening coordination not only among civilian and military personnel,

but also between key political and administrative staff, logisticians, trainers and mission planners. This is part of the overall integrated approach that the Department has been pursuing, through daily coordination meetings, intradepartmental working groups and cross-sectional teams assembled for visits to the field.

31. At the field level, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has instituted integrated support services sections and joint movement control units in the majority of peacekeeping operations. In these sections/units, military and civilian personnel are, to all intents and purposes, fully integrated into a common chain of command and management structure in the technical, logistics and support areas. Furthermore, it has been clearly recognized that the role of Chief Administrative Officers extends beyond enabling the operation to receive the support it requires, to ensuring that civilian and military colleagues are briefed on United Nations rules, regulations and procedures.

32. With regard to procurement issues, the United Nations Common Supplier Database (UNCSD) (which was first launched in May 1998 but requires some further coordination for interface with the existing database before its full implementation) will provide a single gateway for suppliers to the United Nations system. As one of 12 United Nations bodies undertaking to share this database, the Procurement Division of the Office of Central Support Services, Department of Management, will obtain access to a roster of potential suppliers from a broader geographical base. Eventually, the United Nations Common Supplier Database is also expected to allow the Procurement Division to share supplier evaluation information. Requests for expression of interest are being placed upon the home page of the Procurement Division (www.un.org/Depts/ptd), to the extent that the lead time for the procurement exercise permits. In addition, the Procurement Division will continue to make electronic announcements of contract awards upon its home page.

33. In view of the limited human resources available, the Procurement Division is not in a position to produce reports on each and every item procured. However, the Procurement Division stands ready to share all information available concerning peacekeeping procurement with any Member State that can make arrangements to collect the data.

34. The Field Administration and Logistics Division is presently working on a peacekeeping logistics strategy; work is also progressing on the development of revisions to the Operational Support Manual. However, progress in both of these areas is likely to be affected by any reduction in staffing as a result of the present support account budget review.

35. The start-up kits were partially deployed during 1998, in support of the deployment of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic (MINURCA) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), and were instrumental in the rapid establishment of both of those missions. Vehicle and communications equipment was deployed by air, allowing missions to be active as soon as personnel arrived. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now reviewing the contents of the mission start-up kits to take account of the experience gained in these mission deployments. This review is expected to be complete in the spring of 1999. The Field Assets Control System is in the course of implementation in the field missions. As it is intended to be a global system, an assessment of its performance must await installation of the system in at least the majority of the missions.

36. The new contingent-owned equipment reimbursement procedures are being implemented for all new missions as well as retrospectively for existing missions at the request of troop-contributing countries. Field Administration and Logistics Division staff members have been trained in the processing and preparation of the Memorandum of Understanding used for the reimbursement of continent-owned equipment under the new procedures.

37. In the course of 1998, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) has coordinated and fielded six different assessment missions, to Ethiopia, North-west Somalia, Burundi, Yemen, Azerbaijan and Nicaragua; the last of these was dispatched on an urgent basis, in the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch. UNMAS is also mounting a Level I Survey programme, which will measure the impact of mine contamination on specific communities in affected countries. It further serves as a point of contact with all mine action programmes in the field.

38. At Headquarters, an Inter-Agency Coordination Group has been established that comprises United Nations departments and agencies. UNMAS has also established a Steering Committee that includes a range of relevant civil society actors. The Group serves as a vehicle for the identification of priority issues and areas, the coordination of missions and programmes and the development of unified policy. Through these means and others, UNMAS is committed to achieving the breadth of vision and action conveyed in paragraph 77 of the report of the Special Committee (A/53/127).

39. In recognizing the applicability of international humanitarian law to United Nations forces, the status-of-

forces agreements concluded since the early 1990s have included a standard provision whereby the United Nations ensures that United Nations forces conduct their operations in the host country in full respect of the principles and spirit of the general conventions applicable to the conduct of military personnel, including the four Geneva Conventions of 1949, their two Protocols Additional of 1977 and the Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict (The Hague Convention) of 1954. The host country undertakes a corresponding obligation vis-à-vis the United Nations force, and both parties undertake to ensure that members of their respective military personnel are fully acquainted with the principles and spirit of these international instruments.

40. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations has issued standing instructions to all Force Commanders to ensure that peacekeepers under their command adhere to the letter and observe the spirit of international humanitarian law. Awareness of international humanitarian law is also an element in the Secretariat's training efforts, as described below.

41. Interdepartmental efforts are ongoing to formulate standardized guidelines in this regard. In compliance with its obligation under the status-of-forces agreements, and in order to concretize the "spirit and principles" of the relevant conventions by which a United Nations force is bound to conduct its operation, the Secretariat, in cooperation with the International Committee of the Red Cross, is preparing a set of instructions for United Nations forces reflecting the fundamental principles and rules of the four Geneva Conventions, the two Protocols Additional thereto and the customary international law principles of the laws of war.

42. These instructions are being finalized by the Secretariat and will be promulgated shortly in the form of a Secretary-General's bulletin. They will not constitute an exhaustive list of international humanitarian law principles and will not replace those applicable to military contingents under their national law. In case of violations of international humanitarian law, military personnel will be subject to prosecution in their national courts.

43. The promulgation of the Secretary-General's bulletin will respond to the growing need for clarity in determining the scope of application of international humanitarian law to United Nations forces and operations, and the specific provisions that are applicable to them *mutatis mutandis*. Their promulgation is not only warranted by the United Nations undertaking under the status-of-forces agreements, but also in compliance with its obligation under article 1 of all four Geneva Conventions "to respect and to ensure respect" for the international humanitarian law provisions of those Conventions.

44. The Secretariat has also undertaken several measures to strengthen its ability to address misconduct in peacekeeping operations.

45. The biggest hurdle to be overcome in ensuring follow-up to misconduct cases is the fact that the Secretariat's ultimate recourse in dealing with military personnel contributed by Member States is repatriation. The difficulty lies in discerning what legal and disciplinary measures, if any, are then taken by the Government concerned. The Secretariat has therefore instituted, in the case of military personnel, a more systematic tracking of individual cases of misconduct and enhanced follow-up with Member States.

46. Similar obstacles do not pertain to civilian personnel employed by the United Nations, who are subject to direct disciplinary measures by the Organization in accordance with the Staff Rules (ST/SGB/Staff Rules/1/Rev.9, of 1 March 1997).

47. In 1998, as of November, 11 civilian staff in peacekeeping missions were found, after completion of the relevant administrative proceedings, to have committed acts of misconduct.

48. During the year, 42 military personnel were placed under investigation on grounds of alleged misconduct, out of an average deployment of approximately 14,000 military peacekeepers on the ground at any one time. All individuals still present in the mission area at the time the investigation began were immediately repatriated. Notes verbales have been issued to all relevant permanent missions to inquire about follow-up actions at the national level. Out of this number, seven cases have been brought to resolution, with disciplinary action taken by national authorities in four cases.

49. With regard to the Special Committee's call for early consideration of United Nations liability and procedures for settlements of claims, on 26 June 1998, the General Assembly adopted resolution 52/247, entitled "Third-party liability: temporal and financial limitations". In that resolution, the General Assembly took note of my report on third-party liability (A/51/903) and endorsed my proposals for implementing the principles of temporal and financial limitations on the liability of the Organization with regard to personal injury, illness or death and property loss or damage resulting from peacekeeping operations.

50. Efforts to ensure the early inclusion of a public information capacity as an integral part of peacekeeping

operations have met with a measure of success during the past year. Furthermore, a number of existing operations have strengthened the scope of their public information activities. In general terms, these developments reflect a growing awareness among mission personnel of how public information contributes to the success and credibility of a mission, both among the local population and in the international community.

51. With this in mind, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Public Information have continued their close cooperation on such matters as mission staffing, procurement of essential equipment and information support. Headquarters information personnel have participated in a number of assessment missions, including the pre-deployment survey to the Central African Republic and an assessment mission to Western Sahara to review the resource requirements of the public information programme of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

52. In the Central African Republic, MINURCA commenced public information activities shortly after it became operational in April 1998, owing in large measure to early deployment of core information personnel and basic equipment. Early deployment and coordinated planning also enabled MINURCA to lay the groundwork for the launch of the mission's radio station a few weeks later. With a generous contribution from the Government of Denmark, Radio MINURCA quickly established itself as a vital source of objective and factual information on the work of the mission, the elections and other questions of national interest. In November, with an additional donation from Denmark, Radio MINURCA extended its coverage throughout the country, and played an important role in the legislative elections. In accordance with the terms of the Danish gift, the equipment donated for use by Radio MINURCA will remain at the disposal of the United Nations for use in future peacekeeping operations. Other audio-visual equipment currently in storage at the United Nations facility in Brindisi is being inventoried and readied for inclusion in mission start-up kits.

53. A number of other missions are currently reviewing their information needs. In Georgia, the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) is considering ways to strengthen its public information programme with a view to better contributing to the overall goals of the mission. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH), in consultation with the Department of Public Information, has taken a series of measures to refocus the mission's public information activities and develop new terms of reference in light of objectives set by the mission leadership. Similar efforts are under way in the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP), the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT) and UNOMSIL.

54. As noted in last year's report by the Special Committee, I established in March 1998 the Trust Fund to Support Public Information and Related Efforts in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. To date, the Trust Fund has received a generous contribution of $70,000 from Japan; these resources are earmarked for public information activities by UNMOT. It is envisioned that these funds would support various cultural activities and seminars to inform the general population regarding UNMOT's activities, and to broaden understanding and acceptance for the peace process in that country.

55. The Lessons Learned Unit continued to take advantage of the experiences gained by Member States in peacekeeping and to review the implementation of lessons learned in past operations in ongoing missions.

56. In its report to the Committee for Programme and Coordination (E/AC.51/1998/4 and Corr.1), the Office of Internal Oversight Services recommended that the Lessons Learned Unit together with the responsibility centres for major substantive tasks of multi-component operations should review relevant end-of-mission assessments and lessons-learned documents to derive policies and procedures from them.

57. In that context, the Lessons Learned Unit conducted a comprehensive review of lessons learned from the United Nations Transitional Administration for Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (UNTAES). The Unit, in conjunction with external experts, is also in the process of drafting its study on the collection of weapons, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in a peacekeeping environment. It is envisioned that the report (which is based on case studies of Eastern Slavonia, in Croatia; El Salvador; Guatemala; Liberia; Mozambique; and Sierra Leone) would contain draft guidelines for the collection and disposal of small weapons by peacekeeping operations, as well as discussions of issues to be kept in mind when planning demobilization and reintegration programmes.

58. As evidenced by this effort, standardization of procedures for any peacekeeping task is a demanding and labour-intensive process, and must be carefully focused on priority issues. The Secretariat will continue to undertake the wide-ranging review of policies and procedures, as suggested by the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

C. Status-of-forces agreements

59. The compendium of instances in which the Organization could be due restitution as a result of non-compliance with status-of-forces agreements is still under preparation. In respect of the United Nation Peace Forces (UNPF), letters have been sent to the Member States involved seeking reimbursement. However, there may be instances when it would not be possible or reasonable to expect from the host Government strict implementation of the status-of-forces agreement, including, for example, the requirement to provide all accommodation required by a mission. In accordance with the request of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ), claims submitted by Member States concerned will be withheld until the matter can be resolved.

60. The model status-of-forces agreement has been further elaborated to address those issues that arose since the issuance of the model status-of-forces agreement as a General Assembly document in October 1990 (A/45/594). These matters include, in particular, international humanitarian law, United Nations radio stations, contractors and the temporal and financial limitations on the liability of the Organization. Such matters have been incorporated in a draft revised version of the model status-of-forces agreement which will shortly be finalized by the Secretariat.

D. Safety and security

61. Over the past year, the United Nations suffered a variety of incidents, including threats, hostage-taking and murder of both military and civilian personnel, that underlined the need for greater security for peacekeepers. In this context, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has begun a comprehensive review of security requirements, and appreciates the vigorous support of certain Member States for its work in this area; the Secretariat would welcome further reflection and assistance from Member States in addressing this crucial issue. The Secretariat has further developed the Composite Observation and Monitoring Force conceptual approach, which was outlined to the Special Committee last year, and is based upon providing an armed reconnaissance element for observers on mission. One element of its concept was recently used: bullet- and mine-proof vehicles were deployed to UNOMIG to assist military observers in performing their tasks.

E. Training

62. As noted above, today's peacekeeping often has more complex mandates and works with a greater range of partners than before; at the same time, certain core principles continue to apply. The Training Unit has sought in its activities to address these issues holistically.

63. Principles of peacekeeping are the fundamental base for all training programmes. Model status-of-forces agreements and similar standard guidance such as rules of engagement (ROEs) and contribution agreements are essential to better preparing leadership, units and individuals for their roles in peacekeeping. Respect for international humanitarian law is a key element in the training process, with elements included in guidance documentation, selection and training standards, codes of conduct and training courses.

64. All guidance, documentation and training stress the multidimensional nature of peacekeeping operations, the control structures needed to manage these operations, the relationships of the components and the techniques for assuring coordination and a common effort. Training programmes such as "train the trainers" courses include extensive components on human rights, refugees and United Nations security systems. Partnerships have been established with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNHCR, the United Nations Staff College Project and the Office of the United Nations Security Coordinator to provide the expertise for this instruction. Support to peacekeeping exercises focuses on the multidimensional and multinational aspects of this training and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations routinely provides not just military and civilian police role players and trainers, but also Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, political, legal and public information staff members and humanitarian, human rights and non-governmental organization coordinators. The fact that training and support to exercises is based on the participation of multiple Member States, often in regional groupings, can help promote a base of cooperation and common approaches. Security of personnel is an integral element of peacekeeping training, and supporting material is being produced and distributed.

65. Over the past year, Member States have continued to make important strides in the domain of peacekeeping training. There has been a noticeable shift from the basic preparation of individuals and units to the conduct of multidimensional and multilateral exercises, which are addressing some of the major areas associated with the

management and structure of complex operations. While only two invitations to assist Member States to conduct their own exercises were received in 1995–1996, more than 15 requests, involving some 70 States, were received in the course of 1998. This shift has also resulted in better training opportunities for the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and is well suited to the United Nations Training Assistance Team (UNTAT) concept. While only a limited number of training experts can be involved in these exercises, they may have a disproportionate impact because of their capacity to influence decision makers and planners.

66. Specific activities of the Training Unit over the past year included its involvement in two "train-the-trainer" courses in Turin, Italy; two UNTAT courses, in Singapore and Poland; and its support for a Zambian-sponsored mission management training seminar. UNTAT teams supported multinational exercises in Guatemala, Paraguay and Senegal. New publications included hostage incident cards; selection and training guidelines for civilian police; selection and training guidelines for military observers; tables of organization and equipment; provisional guidelines for public information components; and a security awareness aide-mémoire.

67. At the same time, the Training Unit is working within certain limits in terms of human resources. Notwithstanding the recruitment of staff to replace some of the gratis personnel who are being phased out, the Unit will have a reduced capacity.

F. Civilian police

68. The use of police in peacekeeping represents a vital, new dimension of United Nations efforts to respond effectively to the complex problems posed by civil conflict. In this context, as recalled by the Special Committee, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations convened a seminar on this issue in March 1998; the Department's report on the deliberations at this Seminar has been circulated to all Member States.

69. This initial discussion was intended to launch further in-depth reflections upon this question. The Secretariat is now in the process of planning further follow-up activities, in recognition of the fact that much more remains to be done. In the months since the March seminar, the Secretariat has received encouraging indications from certain Member States of their interest in pursuing these considerations, including through follow-on seminars and the sponsorship of studies with a practical orientation. The Secretariat greatly appreciates this support, which is crucial to making progress in this challenging and important task; would welcome further initiatives by Member States in this regard; and stands ready to assist in their coordination. In particular, without such assistance, the Secretariat is not in a position to complete the compilation of draft guidelines on general principles regarding the role of civilian police, drawing on lessons learned, as requested by the Special Committee.

70. Extensive training efforts have been directed to improving the capacity of civilian police to participate in peacekeeping operations; this has included efforts to enhance police peacekeeping capacity within Africa, through a United Nations Civilian Police (UNCIVPOL) training course in South Africa in November 1998. Civilian police are included in all training activities, and have accounted for up to half of the participants in recent "train-the-trainers" courses. Selection and Training Standards, including codes of conduct, have been published and distributed. A training curriculum and handbook support these standards. In addition, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations has completed the drafting of generic CIVPOL Standard Operating Procedures, which govern the day-to-day work of CIVPOL in a mission and include a more detailed code of conduct for civilian police, with the objective of ensuring consistent application of standards in all field operations. This text is currently being reviewed by other interested departments.

71. With a view to enhancing the quality of United Nations civilian police personnel in missions and to ensuring the delivery of a standardized basic pre-deployment training course for police officers selected for United Nations service, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is arranging one-week regional workshops in Europe, Asia and Africa for police trainers of contributing Member States. One such course, for trainers from Eastern European countries, took place in Sweden in December 1998; this course was sponsored by the host country. The United Nations has made plans to hold further courses in 1999, in Malaysia and Ghana, although these plans are contingent upon obtaining support for funding and training instructors.

72. The United Nations has considerably expanded the geographical base for the selection of senior-level civilian police serving within the United Nations over the past year; six additional nationalities are now represented among senior-level appointments.

73. Despite the Special Committee's concern regarding the strength of the Civilian Police Unit, staff size remains limited.

G. Standby arrangements and rapid deployment

74. Over the past year, Member States have increased their commitment to the standby arrangements system of specialized units, including engineering and medical units. However, in view of the continuing need for such capacity, the Secretariat will continue to emphasize development of these elements. A concerted effort has also been made to enlist more African Member States in the standby arrangement system; the number of African States in the database has almost doubled over the past year, and now stands at 22.

75. With reference to the request by the Special Committee for clarification regarding the respective roles of the Rapidly Deployable Mission Headquarters (RDMHQ) and of the Mission Planning Service (MPS), while the latter represents a planning mechanism at the strategic and operational level within the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, which may also contribute during peacemaking activities, the former would be an implementing body and a mechanism that would be deployed to operate within a mission area in the context of an authorized peacekeeping operation.

76. The work performed by MPS includes the preparation of military aspects of peacekeeping doctrine, the organization and maintenance of standby arrangements and the elaboration of generic planning. The Service also prepares conceptual plans, participates in technical surveys and assists with mission composition; this specialized work is key to the formulation of concepts of operations for new peacekeeping missions or to the adjustment of the modus operandi of existing ones.

77. By contrast, the responsibility of RDMHQ would be to convert the concept and operational plans into usable theatre- and tactical-level plans and operational orders; to prepare associated standard operating procedures (SOPs); and to act as an advance headquarters within a mission area during the initial months when swift deployment may be crucial to long-term success. RDMHQ would be replaced in three to six months, as the mission's own headquarters was consolidated. At those times when it was not to be deployed to the field, RDMHQ would promote common understanding with the forces of potential troop contributors through joint training.

H. Finances

78. Considerable progress has been made in processing the initial backlog of death and disability claims. Of the 564 claims received prior to 19 May 1997, 482 had been processed, as of December 1998, while 82 remained outstanding pending receipt of additional documentation from the Governments concerned. In addition, of 584 additional claims that were received between May 1997 and August 1998, 529 have been processed, while 52 remain outstanding. In September 1998 alone, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations received 235 additional claims, as well as 326 declarations of intent to submit claims, all of which would be processed according to the previously established procedures. The phasing out of gratis personnel will have considerable implications for the Secretariat's efforts to address this extensive workload.

79. That the Secretariat learned a number of lessons in past liquidation exercises, has meant that the operational liquidation of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and UNTAES, for example, were accomplished smoothly and effectively.

80. The vast majority of the backlog of claims for contingent-owned equipment has now been reviewed, with the initial calculations having been forwarded to the relevant permanent missions for concurrence; certification of these claims is delayed only when troop contributors are not in agreement with the Secretariat's calculations, or the required supporting documentation is not received in a timely manner. The Secretariat expects to be able to realistically determine the amounts owed for contingent-owned equipment reimbursement shortly, at which time a request for additional appropriation will be submitted. Once the required appropriation has been provided, reimbursement will be effected.

V. Cooperation with regional arrangements

81. In recent years, the Secretariat has seen a wide-ranging consideration of the ways in which regional actors can enhance their participation in United Nations work for peace. In view of certain practical and political limitations, such partnerships cannot be considered a panacea to the problems facing peacekeeping. However, they have, in certain situations and under the right conditions, proved crucial to advancing peace. The Secretariat welcomes this new collaboration.

82. The Lessons Learned Unit is in the process of finalizing its study of cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations or arrangements, which seeks to define principles and mechanisms to enhance such cooperation. As requested by the Special Committee, it will be disseminated to relevant regional arrangements and agencies upon completion.

83. As requested by the Special Committee, the Secretariat has submitted a report upon the implementation and follow-up of its recommendations that the United Nations, in consultation with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and with the cooperation of Member States, give particular attention to enhancing African peacekeeping capacity in various ways, including through strengthening of the institutional capacity of OAU. This report, which was drafted after close consultation with OAU officials, offers a detailed assessment of these efforts, including both those undertaken by the Secretariat, and those undertaken in partnership with Member States. It also offers a number of proposals on ways in which further progress may be made in this important endeavour.

84. As noted by the Special Committee, the third high-level meeting of the United Nations and regional organizations took place from 28 to 29 July 1998, and included the participation of the Presidents of the General Assembly and of the Security Council. Among the measures recommended by this meeting were enhancing coordination and consultation between regional organizations and the United Nations; creating better flows of information through systematic mechanisms; exchange of liaison officers and of lists of staff officers; visits of staff at working level between headquarters; arrangement of joint expert meetings on specific areas of early warning; development of common indicators for early warning; and establishment of a database of the early warning and conflict prevention capabilities of the United Nations and regional organizations. I subsequently reported upon the results of this meeting to the General Assembly and the Security Council on 21 August 1998 (see document A/52/1021–S/1998/785). A follow-up meeting at the working level was held in New York on 10 and 11 December 1998. This meeting offered a useful opportunity for an exchange of ideas between participating organizations, and for making some practical advances in developing the modalities recommended by the high-level meeting in July.

VI. Observations

85. On 6 October 1998, the United Nations commemorated the fiftieth anniversary of peacekeeping.

86. The Secretariat warmly welcomed the adoption on that occasion by the General Assembly, in its resolution 53/2, of the supportive declaration that was drafted by the Special Committee, entitled "Declaration on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of United Nations peacekeeping", and contained in the annex to that resolution. In this declaration, Member States reiterated their support for all efforts to effectively promote the safety and security of United Nations peacekeeping personnel, and affirmed their commitment and willingness to provide full support to United Nations peacekeepers to ensure that they can fulfil the tasks entrusted to them. This commemoration offered important encouragement to the Secretariat at Headquarters, and to the nearly 14,500 troops, police and observers who are serving the international community with dedication and courage in areas of conflict around the world.

87. The spirit of solidarity that it demonstrated will be of key importance if the international community is to successfully strengthen the instrument of peacekeeping for the future. Also, as described above, close cooperation between Member States and the Secretariat is crucial to promptly addressing concerns regarding security; to advancing our understanding of, and capacity to respond to, the needs of police in peacekeeping; and to promoting gender balance in peacekeeping. Such cooperation is also key to progress in the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity, as outlined in my report on this subject.

88. I would like to express my deep appreciation for the collaboration that has permitted such significant achievements in the first five decades of United Nations peacekeeping. The Secretariat stands ready to work closely with Member States to meet the challenges that lie ahead.